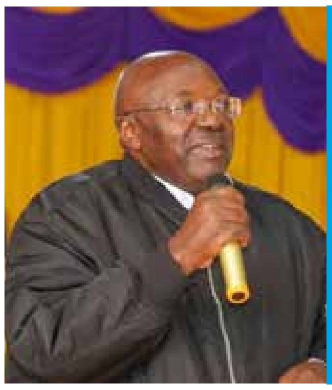


Othaya MP rallies behind modern markets to spur economic growth in the constituency

Construction of the proposed Ndungu SP Market is set to add momentum to the ongoing transformation of Othaya Constituency as area MP

Page 8

CJ launches Kisii county alternative justice systems action plan to expand access to justice

Chief Justice Martha Koome has officially launched the Kisii County Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) County Action Plan, the Kisii County AJS Model, the Kisii AJS Suite

Page 12

Wednesday, August 5, 2026 No. 01606 KSh 60 (TSh 1,700 : USh 2,700 : RFr 900)

themtkenyatimes Voice of the People

The Mt. Kenya Times
Daily ePAPER
www.mountkenyatimes.co.ke

Counties Murang'a led the country in multiple sectors including health, housing, water management, culture and sports, social services, & planning

Kang'ata tops governor rankings

Murang'a County has been ranked Kenya's best-performing devolved unit in the 2026 Infotrak CountyTrak Performance Index, scoring 54 per cent overall, while Governor Irungu Kang'ata posted the highest approval rating of any governor in the country at 80 per cent.

The survey, released yesterday examined how counties have performed across a broad range of devolved functions, with Murang'a leading the country in multiple sectors including health, housing, water management, culture and sports, social services, and planning. Kiambu followed in second place at 52 per cent, with Trans Nzoia third at 50 per cent.

The results represent more than a snapshot. They tell a story of consistent, compounding improvement by an administration that has quietly built one of the most complete county governance records in Kenya. Kang'ata's approval rating has climbed from 64 per cent in 2023 to 68 per cent in 2024 and now 80 per cent in 2026 — a trajectory that has carried him from fourth place three years ago to first place today. Few governors in Kenya's devolution history have risen as steadily, or as verifiably.

Page 9

Governor Irungu Kang'ata

Ruto urges grassroots leaders to drive national development charter talks

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Some of the moments as captured in pictures

Worth Noting:

President William Ruto has called on grassroots leaders to spearhead public participation on the proposed National Development Charter, saying the process must be people-driven, citizen-centred and focused on the country's future.

Speaking at State House, Nairobi, where he hosted more than 10,000 village elders, the President said the national conversation should extend beyond government offices and conference halls to every county, ward, village and household.

He said the initiative seeks to give practical effect to Article 43 of the Constitution by ensuring every Kenyan has access to quality healthcare, adequate housing and sanitation, food security, clean and safe water, social security and education.

Ruto announced that 106,000 village elders from all 47 counties have been integrated into the National Government Administration system to strengthen service delivery at the grassroots.

He also announced that, effective immediately, village elders will receive a monthly stipend of KSh3,000. The government is further working to pay their Social Health Authority premiums from January 2027, provide them with smartphones to support their work and deploy more Administration Police officers to enhance security in villages.

He was accompanied by several senior government officials led by Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi.











Editor's Desk

The Mt. Kenya Times


The Mt Kenya Times is a Kenyan Newspaper that provides a unified view of Kenyan news, entrepreneurship, events, opinions, analysis, and a historical background to current affairs in a way that is both creative and innovative.
It is published by **Exponential International Limited**, a Private Limited Liability company incorporated in Kenya to provide Communications and Media services.

Group Executive Chairman
M. Danson
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-mwangi-1b47446b/

Our Contacts
P. O. Box 101 675 - 00101 Nairobi, Cell: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262
Editorial Desk: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Adverts:** ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke,
News Desk: news@mtkenyatimes.co.ke, **Web**: www.mtkenyatimes.co.ke

Facebook: Mt. Kenya Times, **Instagram:** Mt. Kenya Times , **Twitter**: @themtkenyatimes
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/mt-kenya-times-a07999115/

NEWS IN BRIEF

The National Crime Research Centre (NCRC) today held a consultative meeting with the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) to explore areas of collaboration aimed at strengthening efforts to combat emerging financial crimes in Kenya. The NCRC delegation, led by Deputy Director Dr. Tioko Logiron, outlined priority areas for joint research and cooperation, including financial fraud, insider trading, market manipulation and other forms of white-collar crime. The two institutions also discussed mechanisms for information sharing, capacity building and coordinated initiatives to safeguard the integrity of the country's financial sector. The CMA delegation was led by Chief Executive Officer Mr. Wycliffe Shamiah and included officers from the Authority's Investigations and Enforcement Department.

Kilifi Mnazi Wines Limited is seeking to commercialise traditional coconut wine by processing and bottling it into branded products, creating new opportunities for coconut farmers and tappers along the Coast. The company, which began operations in March 2026 in Mtondia, Kilifi County, buys raw Mnazi from local tappers before producing two products: Mnana, a dry wine with about 24 per cent alcohol, and Katozi, a sweet wine with about four per cent alcohol. According to Chairperson Dr. Mtana Lewa, the venture aims to unlock the untapped economic potential of the coconut value chain. He said the project could significantly increase incomes for tappers while creating jobs in transport, processing and packaging as production expands to meet growing market demand.

The Jubilee Party has stepped up its grassroots mobilization efforts following a consultative meeting between the party leadership and Members of the County Assembly (MCAs) from Samburu County. The meeting, led by Secretary General Moitalel Ole Kenta and Executive Director Dann Mwangi, focused on strengthening the party's grassroots structures, rolling out county mobilization activities and rallying support for the presidential candidature of Dr. Fred Matiang'i ahead of the 2027 General Election. During the meeting, the Samburu MCAs reaffirmed their loyalty and commitment to the Jubilee Party, pledging to support its programmes and expansion at the grassroots. The party said the growing support from grassroots leaders reinforces its position as a platform for issue-based politics and expressed confidence that it will build the momentum needed to secure victory in the next presidential election.

Residents of Ngoliba in Kiambu County have opposed an alleged plan to relocate the Soya Bridge linking Thika and Gatanga constituencies, describing it as a critical transport link for thousands of people. The bridge was constructed in 2022 at a cost of Sh25 million after the previous crossing was destroyed by floods. The residents said they became concerned after spotting earth-moving equipment at the site and receiving reports that the bridge would be dismantled and reinstalled elsewhere within Thika Constituency. Led by Simon Shikuku, they said they had initially been informed that the bridge would only undergo repairs after one side started sagging due to damage caused by heavy trucks. They urged the government to repair and reinforce the bridge instead of relocating it.

The Tugen Hills Farmers' Cooperative Society, the largest farmers' cooperative in Baringo County, has raised concern over a sharp decline in milk production across the county's highland areas. Speaking during an educational meeting at Katimok Coffee Factory grounds in Baringo North Sub-county, the society's secretary, Mark Yatich, attributed the three-year decline to poor farmer-level practices and inadequate support from the county government for the dairy sector. He said milk production had dropped from 86,000 litres in 2024 to 22,000 litres by June this year. Yatich warned that if the trend continues, the cooperative may be forced to close its main dairy unit in Kabarnet, which supplies milk to businesses and institutions across the county.

Mourners in Nyeri town were left surprised after prominent businessman James Mwaura Kigutu was buried privately, a day before the previously announced burial date. Family members had earlier indicated that the burial would take place today but was hurriedly buried yesterday. The body was moved from Outspan Funeral Home in a hearse and escorted by a small convoy to his home in Thunguma village near Nyeri Town, where he was interred in a ceremony attended only by close family members, in accordance with his wishes. Security officers restricted access to the residence, keeping away other mourners. According to the family, Kigutu, who did not profess any faith, had directed that his business premises remain open during his burial. *Report by James Gatama*


The Africa Largest
eCOMMERCE
www. gotyou.co.ke
NOW
OPEN
Call/Text/WhatsApp: +254 714 090 155

Education "The salaries of professors must not be lowered," Mukhwaya said

KUSU demands salary protection and funding for universities

The union calls on the government to honour legally binding agreements and release over KSh100 billion owed to public institutions

BY John Kariuki
@themtkenyatimes


KUSU Secretary-General Charles Mukhwaya

The Kenya Universities Staff Union (KUSU) yesterday called on the government to abandon any plans to reduce professors' salaries, honour all Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in force, and release more than KSh100 billion owed to public universities.

Speaking on behalf of the union, KUSU Secretary-General Charles Mukhwaya said any move to cut professors' pay would deal a direct blow to Kenya's higher education sector, further weakening institutions already under severe financial strain.

"The salaries of professors must not be lowered. Our universities cannot attract, retain and motivate world-class scholars if the government continues to undermine the welfare of academic staff," Mukhwaya said.

He urged the government to urgently disburse the more than KSh100 billion owed to public universities, warning that chronic underfunding is crippling teaching, research, innovation and the delivery of quality education.

"Our universities are under immense financial pressure. The government must honour its obligations without delay. A knowledge-driven economy cannot be built by starving the very institutions that produce the country's skilled workforce," he said.

Mukhwaya also opposed any administrative attempts to alter the retirement age for university staff, insisting that retirement terms had been negotiated and incorporated into legally binding CBAs. His remarks come against the backdrop of a Public Service Commission circular issued on March 2 this year, which reduced the retirement age for professors from 74 to 70 years. The Employment and Labour Relations Court initially suspended the directive but upheld it on July 29 following a challenge by the Universities Academic Staff Union.

"The retirement age was mutually agreed upon through collective bargaining and the agreements were duly registered by the courts. Those agreements carry the force of law and must be respected," Mukhwaya said.

He maintained that a government circular cannot override a court-registered CBA.

"A circular is inferior to a mutually agreed Collective Bargaining Agreement that has been registered in court. The government must respect the law and honour the agreements it freely entered into," he said.

While affirming KUSU's commitment to constructive engagement, Mukhwaya called for genuine dialogue between the government, university councils and workers' representatives to resolve outstanding issues.

"KUSU believes in dialogue. Meaningful engagement remains the best avenue for resolving labour disputes and strengthening our institutions. However, dialogue must be anchored on mutual respect, good faith and adherence to existing agreements," he said.

Mukhwaya further noted that as the country enters an election cycle, workers across Kenya are assessing leaders on their track record on labour rights.

"As the election year approaches, workers are looking to leaders who will stand with them, safeguard their rights and honour commitments made to Kenyan workers. Respect for labour rights is a measure of responsible leadership," he said.

The union reiterated its commitment to defending the rights and welfare of university staff, calling on the government to uphold the Constitution, respect existing CBAs, adequately fund public universities and safeguard the integrity of Kenya's higher education system.

Kaguchia bailed after charged with offensive conduct


Mukurweini MP John Kaguchia

BY Grace Wanja
@themtkenyatimes

Mukurweini MP John Kaguchia was yesterday released on KSh250,000 cash bail after being arraigned at the Milimani Law Courts on a charge of offensive conduct conducive to a breach of the peace, following his arrest outside Royal Media Services studios on Monday morning.

Kaguchia did not enter a plea. His lawyers challenged both the validity of the charge sheet and the court's jurisdiction before Senior Principal Magistrate Teresiah Nyangena, arguing that the particulars of the charge were insufficient to sustain the offence and that their client had not been given prompt access to legal counsel.

The prosecution alleges that on August 1 at Naromoru Shopping Centre in Kieni East, Nyeri County, Kaguchia knowingly uttered words in Kikuyu intended to provoke a breach of the peace — specifically, that anyone who voted for or supported President William Ruto, whom he allegedly referred to as "Kasongo", would be socially isolated, excluded from bereavement visits and dowry ceremonies, and directed to seek medical treatment in Sugoi.

The MP had spent the previous night inside the media house after raising alarm that armed, hooded officers had surrounded the premises. Emerging from custody Tuesday morning, Kaguchia was unbowed. "A night in the police cell has only strengthened our resolve and commitment to justice," he said. "Today, we soldier on."

The court released him on a bond of KSh1 million, with the KSh250,000 cash bail alternative. The matter returns to court today.

Registrar to review Linda Mwananchi name rejection

The opposition movement expects a final decision by the end of the week as it pushes to formalise into a registered party ahead of 2027

Linda Mwananchi Movement spokesperson Caroli Omondi addresses the press, flanked by other leaders, after holding a meeting with the Registrar of Political Parties | *Photo:* Courtesy

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes

The Registrar of Political Parties, John Cox Lorionokou, has agreed to review his office's earlier rejection of the Linda Mwananchi movement's application to reserve a party name, following a consultative meeting with the movement's leadership yesterday.

The delegation, led by Suba South MP Caroli Omondi, met the Registrar seeking a review of the decision that declined reservation of the name Linda Mwananchi, arguing it was based on an incorrect interpretation of the law. Omondi said the Registrar had committed to communicating his final determination by the end of the week.

"We had an extensive discussion. There is no reason to refuse the name Linda Mwananchi Movement. The Registrar has told us he will review his decision and give us feedback at the end of the week," Omondi said.

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties had earlier rejected an application to reserve the name Linda Mwananchi Party of Kenya, citing Section 8 of the Political Parties Act, on the grounds that the proposed name closely resembled already reserved political slogans — including Linda Mkenya and Boresha Kenya — and raised public interest concerns.

The movement has attracted several prominent opposition figures, among them Nairobi Senator Edwin Sifuna, Siaya Governor James Orengo, Kisii Senator Richard Onyonka, Vihiga Senator Godfrey Osotsi, and Embakasi East MP Babu Owino — leaders who have openly criticised political cooperation between sections of the opposition and President William Ruto's administration. Anticipating further resistance, the faction has also strategically reserved two alternative backup names.

Omondi remained confident the impasse would be resolved. "Kenyans should not be worried. Once the name is reserved, everything else will fall into place," he said.

The Registrar's decision will determine whether the movement can proceed to full party registration under the Political Parties Act — and whether one of Kenya's most closely watched new political formations enters the 2027 election cycle as a legally constituted party or remains in the margins.

Othaya MP rallies behind modern markets to spur economic growth in the constituency

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Othaya MP Wambugu Wainaina addressing faithful in one of the local churches last Sunday. | *Photo: Courtesy.*

Construction of the proposed Ndungu SP Market is set to add momentum to the ongoing transformation of Othaya Constituency as area MP Wambugu Wainaina intensifies efforts to improve trading infrastructure and create more economic opportunities for residents.

The legislator said the modern market is part of a broader agenda to empower farmers, traders and small businesses by providing conducive and well-equipped trading spaces that will enhance commerce and improve livelihoods.

According to Wambugu, the project will directly benefit agricultural producers by improving access to markets while creating employment opportunities for young people during construction and after completion.

"Empowerment begins with opportunity. A modern, well-equipped market will create a conducive environment for farmers, traders and businesses to thrive, benefiting every household in Othaya either directly or indirectly," he said.

He noted that besides boosting local trade, the market will strengthen the constituency's economy by attracting more businesses and increasing incomes for residents.

The MP emphasized that development should be measured by tangible projects that improve people's lives, saying his leadership remains focused on delivering lasting investments rather than engaging in politics.

"Development is not just a promise; it is a commitment," he said, adding that strategic lobbying for national government-funded projects had enabled Othaya to secure key infrastructure investments.

The Ndungu SP Market in Mahiga ward is among three major market projects currently planned for the constituency. Similar modern markets are also being developed in Othaya town and Kagicha Trading Centre in Chinga Ward as part of efforts to modernize trading centres across the constituency.

The projects complement other ongoing development initiatives spearheaded by Wambugu, including the construction of a three-storey modern market in Othaya town, upgrading of feeder roads serving tea and coffee-growing areas, expansion of electricity connectivity and construction of the Othaya Stadium, which are intended to improve economic activity and social amenities.

Residents are expected to benefit from improved market facilities that will offer safer and more organized trading spaces, reduce post-harvest losses and increase access to customers for farmers and traders.

The MP maintained that the projects reflect his commitment to transforming Othaya into a vibrant commercial and agricultural hub, saying investments in infrastructure remain central to improving livelihoods and securing a brighter future for the constituency.

Part of Ndunyu SP market that is under construction

Counties Murang'a led the country in multiple sectors including health, housing, water management, culture and sports, social services, and planning. Kiambu followed in second place

Murang'a leads Kenya's counties as Kang'ata tops governor rankings

The Infotrak CountyTrak index, the most comprehensive county performance survey yet conducted, places Murang'a first nationally across multiple sectors — with a governor whose approval rating has nearly doubled in three years

BY David Kimani
@themtkenyatimes

Murang'a County has been ranked Kenya's best-performing devolved unit in the 2026 Infotrak CountyTrak Performance Index, scoring 54 per cent overall, while Governor Irungu Kang'ata posted the highest approval rating of any governor in the country at 80 per cent.

The survey, released yesterday examined how counties have performed across a broad range of devolved functions, with Murang'a leading the country in multiple sectors including health, housing, water management, culture and sports, social services, and planning. Kiambu followed in second place at 52 per cent, with Trans Nzoia third at 50 per cent.

The results represent more than a snapshot. They tell a story of consistent, compounding improvement by an administration that has quietly built one of the most complete county governance records in Kenya. Kang'ata's approval rating has climbed from 64 per cent in 2023 to 68 per cent in 2024 and now 80 per cent in 2026 — a trajectory that has carried him from fourth place three years ago to first place today. Few governors in Kenya's devolution history have risen as steadily, or as verifiably.

The sector-by-sector picture is equally striking. Murang'a leads the country in roads and transport with 54 per cent — a figure the report describes as topping every region, including all other regional winners in the Central bloc. In trade and tourism, the county scores 51 per cent; in housing, lands and settlement, 53 per cent; and in water management and sanitation, 55 per cent. Crucially, these are not one-cycle results. The report notes that Murang'a has improved its housing score from 48 per cent to 50 per cent to 53 per cent across successive cycles, describing it as the only county improving in both periods. In water management, the progression from 52 to 53 to 55 per cent has opened what the index calls a three-point lead over its nearest competitors.

Murang'a also ranked first in the use of technology to deliver services, scoring 51 per cent, and topped the ranking on the management of public funds at 47 per cent — ahead of Kisii at 44 per cent and Kiambu at 43 per cent. These are the categories that citizens notice most directly: whether the roads are passable, whether the water runs, whether the money meant for public services actually reaches them.

Infotrak assessed governors across six key indicators: delivery on campaign promises, transparency and accountability, visible development and public benefit, prudent management of public funds, accessibility and responsiveness to citizens, and media visibility. The survey identified delivery on campaign promises as the most important factor Kenyans use when rating elected leaders, cited by 41.5 per cent of respondents, followed by transparency and accountability at 35.1 per cent, initiation of development projects at 29.8 per cent, and the use of county funds at 28.4 per cent. On all four of those primary measures, Murang'a's performance record offers a coherent answer.

Coming in second and third in the governor rankings are George Natembeya of Trans Nzoia with 76 per cent and Kimani Wamatangi of Kiambu with 71 per cent respectively. Wamatangi's rise is among the most dramatic in this year's index, surging from 29th position in 2023 to third in 2026, with his approval rating climbing from 54 per cent to 71 per cent — one of the sharpest individual turnarounds in the survey's history.

Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga emerged fourth with a 66 per cent approval rating, making her the only female governor among the top ten performers. Makueni's Mutula Kilonzo Jr tied with Wanga at 66 per cent, while Elgeyo Marakwet's

Governor Irungu Kang'ata

Wesley Rotich, Kisumu's Anyang' Nyong'o, and West Pokot's Simon Kachapin each scored 65 per cent. Kisii's Simba Arati and Samburu's Jonathan Lelelit completed the top ten, each at 63 per cent.

In the category of most improved governors, Mandera's Mohamed Adan Khalif topped the list, followed by Wajir's Ahmed Abdullahi and Garissa's Nathif Jama — the three North Eastern governors sweeping the improvement rankings in a result that signals a broader shift in governance standards in a region that has historically struggled to register in national performance indices.

Notably absent from the top 25 counties was Nairobi, and Governor Johnson Sakaja did not feature among the top-ranked governors — a significant omission for Kenya's capital and the country's most heavily resourced county, and one that is certain to generate political scrutiny as the 2027 election cycle draws closer.

The research was conducted between January and May 2026 across all 47 counties, covering all 290 constituencies and 1,450 wards, with a total sample of 36,200 respondents. Sample sizes ranged from 600 to 2,000 per county depending on population size and number of wards, with each county treated as an independent survey universe. The methodology gives the index a credibility that single-county or perception-only surveys cannot match.

What the data ultimately reflects is a shift in how Kenyans are beginning to evaluate devolution — not through the lens of political loyalty or ethnic affiliation, but through the tangible experience of whether their county government works. Roads. Water. Housing. Accountability. These are the metrics that are quietly reshaping Kenya's political landscape ahead of 2027, and the counties that have taken them seriously are now seeing that seriousness rewarded in public trust.

For Murang'a, the results confirm what its residents have experienced on the ground. For Kang'ata, they validate a governing philosophy built on visible delivery rather than political theatre. For Kenya's other 44 counties, the index offers both a benchmark and a warning: in a country where voters are paying closer attention than ever before, the numbers will eventually catch up with the record.

Wildlife "They are a warning that Kenya's pesticide governance, regulatory oversight and enforcement systems require urgent reform," Dr Kahumbu said

WildlifeDirect demands independent probe into Amboseli elephant deaths, warns of wider public health risk

A carcass of an elephant

BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

Wildlife conservation organisation, WildlifeDirect has called for an independent investigation into the deaths of 15 elephants in the Amboseli ecosystem, warning that the incident points to deeper failures in Kenya's pesticide regulation system that could threaten not only wildlife but also farmers and consumers.

In a statement issued yesterday, WildlifeDirect Chief Executive Officer Dr Paula Kahumbu said the deaths should be treated as a national emergency requiring urgent and coordinated action from multiple government agencies.

"The reported deaths of at least 15 elephants in the Amboseli ecosystem are not simply a wildlife tragedy. They are a warning that Kenya's pesticide governance, regulatory oversight and enforcement systems require urgent reform," Dr Kahumbu said.

Her remarks come days after the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) announced preliminary investigations had detected traces of cyanide in samples taken from the carcasses of elephants that died between June 24 and July 24 in Amboseli National Park, Kimana Sanctuary and Kuku Ranch in Kajiado County.

KWS said 10 of the elephants exhibited symptoms of partial paralysis before dying within one to two days, while most of the victims were breeding females and calves.

WildlifeDirect said the findings have raised broader concerns over pesticide use in farming areas neighbouring wildlife habitats, particularly around tomato farms where investigators suspect contaminated produce may have exposed the animals to toxic chemicals.

Dr Kahumbu questioned whether hazardous chemicals capable of killing elephants could also be entering the human food chain.

"If toxic chemicals are capable of entering crops consumed by elephants, we must ask whether farmers, farm workers, neighbouring communities, livestock and consumers are being adequately protected," she said.

The conservation organisation argued that the incident has evolved beyond a wildlife issue into a public health concern, noting that long-term exposure to hazardous pesticides has been linked to hormonal disorders, cancers, impaired child development, miscarriages and weakened immune systems.

WildlifeDirect also cited a recent performance audit by the Auditor-General, which reportedly found significant weaknesses in the regulation of pesticides by the Pest Control Products Board (PCPB).

According to the organisation, the audit revealed inadequate post-registration surveillance, failure to maintain an updated database of pesticide-handling premises and limited monitoring of environmental impacts. It further noted that authorities seized 28,617 kilogrammes of expired, counterfeit and unregistered pesticides during the 2024/25 financial year.

The organisation said many farmers rely almost entirely on advice from agrochemical dealers without access to independent information on the long-term health and environmental effects of the products they use.

It warned that where illegal, counterfeit or unregistered pesticides enter the market, the consequences are borne by ordinary Kenyans, wildlife and future generations.

WildlifeDirect is now urging the Government to establish an independent investigation involving KWS, the PCPB, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Water, county governments and independent scientific experts, with all findings released publicly.

The organisation also wants stronger accountability measures for public officials found to have neglected enforcement responsibilities and prosecution of individuals or companies involved in the illegal importation, sale or misuse of prohibited pesticides.

It further called for a nationwide audit of pesticide registration, importation and distribution, regular compliance inspections and residue testing, greater public access to information on chemicals used in agriculture, and expanded farmer education on integrated pest management and safer alternatives.

"The Amboseli elephants may have revealed a much larger problem," Dr Kahumbu said, adding, "Their deaths should prompt a national conversation about how hazardous chemicals are regulated, monitored and enforced in Kenya."

The latest incident follows another poisoning episode in the Amboseli ecosystem in January this year in which six lions and 32 vultures died, a pattern WildlifeDirect says suggests systemic weaknesses rather than isolated incidents.

The Amboseli ecosystem, which supports approximately 2,000 elephants, is internationally recognised for its conservation success after elephant poaching declined sharply over the past decade. Conservationists fear the latest deaths could undermine those gains if the underlying causes are not addressed.

Although KWS has indicated preliminary laboratory findings point to cyanide exposure associated with agricultural chemicals, investigations are continuing to establish the exact source of the contamination and whether other environmental factors may have contributed. The agency has maintained that there is currently no evidence of an infectious disease and that further scientific analysis is underway.

Lifestyle **The truth that social media will never volunteer is this: it shows celebrations but hides the sacrifices behind them**

The silent pressure of being young: Choosing purpose over popularity

A generation more connected than ever is quietly drowning in comparison — and the only way out is wisdom

A depressed student

BY Hadassah Karangu
@themtkenyatimes

There is a battle many young people are fighting today that nobody talks about openly. It is not always about money, school fees, or opportunity. Sometimes the heaviest burden is the relentless pressure to fit in, keep up, and present a life that looks perfect — even when it is falling apart.

Ours is the most connected generation in human history, yet an entire cohort of young people has never felt more overwhelmed. Every morning begins the same way: a scroll through a feed populated with expensive holidays, luxury cars, gleaming apartments, thriving businesses, and relationships that appear to have been choreographed for maximum envy. It becomes easy — dangerously easy — to conclude that everyone else has figured life out while you are still searching for where yours begins.

The question surfaces often: did our parents face this kind of pressure? They did, but theirs was different. Their comparisons were bounded by geography — a neighbour, a cousin, a colleague at work. Their struggle was survival, and the benchmarks were human-scaled. Today's young person is measuring themselves against millions of strangers from every corner of the world. One swipe and you can see someone buying a car at twenty-three, another backpacking through Europe, another getting engaged, another breaking ground on a mansion. Before long, the quiet questions begin. Am I behind? What am I doing wrong? Why does everyone seem to be ahead of me? Those questions, left unanswered and unchallenged, quietly erode confidence and steal peace.

The truth that social media will never volunteer is this: it shows celebrations but hides the sacrifices behind them. It shows the achievement but never the years of failure that preceded it. It shows the smile but never the tears that came before the camera clicked. We are comparing our unedited, complicated, real lives against someone else's curated highlight reel — and then wondering why we feel inadequate.

Comparison, as the old wisdom rightly warns, is the thief of joy. And the theft is thorough. We stop appreciating genuine progress because it looks modest against what we see online. We dismiss real victories as insignificant. In doing so, many young people begin living beyond their means — borrowing to maintain appearances, upgrading phones on schedule, spending what ought to be saved, all in service of a performance for an audience that is barely watching.

There is something quietly powerful about choosing to live within your means. It is not a confession of failure or a lack of ambition. It is the recognition that every season of life carries its own purpose. There are seasons for learning, seasons for saving, seasons for building, and seasons for enjoying what the hard work produced. Starting small is not shameful. Every significant success begins with small, consistent, unglamorous steps.

The normalisation of alcohol and drug use compounds all of this. Drinking has become so routine that declining can mark a person as an outsider. Substances are presented as standard tools for stress relief or social participation. What the glamorous party photographs never show are the consequences that tend to follow — broken relationships, damaged careers, addiction, poor decisions made in moments of impairment, and dreams that dissolve slowly, quietly, long before the person notices they are gone. The strongest person in a room is often not the one with the drink in hand. It is frequently the one who says, without apology, "No, thank you."

Who you spend time with matters enormously. Friends who normalise reckless spending will pull you toward recklessness. Friends who pressure you into choices that conflict with your values will make resistance progressively harder. Good friends — genuinely good ones — respect your limits, celebrate your growth rather than compete with it, and tell you the truth precisely when you least want to hear it.

Learning to say no without guilt is among the hardest and most important skills a young person can develop. Not every invitation warrants acceptance. Not every trend deserves your attention or your money. Protecting your peace will occasionally mean disappointing people, and that is not only acceptable — it is wise.

We also need to redefine success on more honest terms. It is not wearing expensive clothes while drowning in debt. It is not performing happiness online while quietly struggling. True success is becoming the person you were made to be — waking up knowing that your decisions are building something real, something durable, something worth inheriting.

Life is not a race with a universal finishing line. Not everyone graduates at the same age. Not everyone marries at the same time. Not everyone finds financial stability in their twenties. Every path is distinct, and every season teaches something that cannot be learned any other way.

Years from now, nobody will remember how many parties you attended or how faithfully you tracked every trend. What will remain are the lives you touched, the dreams you pursued, the discipline that shaped your character, and the quiet choices made when no one was watching.

Choose purpose. Choose growth. Choose wisdom. One decision at a time.

Youths at work

Justice Chief Justice said the initiative demonstrates the Judiciary's commitment to implementing Article 159 of the Constitution

CJ launches Kisii county alternative justice systems action plan to expand access to justice

BY Elizabeth Angira
@themtkenyatimes

Chief Justice Martha Koome has officially launched the Kisii County Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) County Action Plan, the Kisii County AJS Model, the Kisii AJS Suite, and Alternative Justice Systems Registries at Kisii, Ogembo and Etago Law Courts, marking a major milestone in expanding access to justice through community-based dispute resolution.

Speaking during the launch in Kisii, the Chief Justice said the initiative demonstrates the Judiciary's commitment to implementing Article 159 of the Constitution, which promotes Alternative Justice Systems as complementary mechanisms for resolving disputes while upholding constitutional values, human rights and the rule of law.

"The launch of these initiatives is a significant milestone not only for the people of Kisii County but also for our national journey towards building a justice system that is more accessible, inclusive, responsive and people-centred," Justice Koome said.

She emphasized that Alternative Justice Systems do not replace the formal courts but complement them by allowing suitable disputes to be resolved through dialogue, mediation and reconciliation.

According to the Chief Justice, the approach reduces the cost and time of resolving disputes, preserves relationships, strengthens community cohesion and allows courts to focus on cases that require judicial intervention.

Justice Koome noted that the Kisii County Action Plan was informed by a county justice needs assessment, which identified land disputes as the leading source of conflict, followed by succession, family and boundary disputes. The assessment also revealed that the high cost of litigation, lengthy court processes, procedural complexities and long distances to courts continue to limit access to justice, despite strong public confidence in community-based dispute resolution mechanisms.

She said Kisii's unique social and historical circumstances require justice solutions tailored to the needs of local communities.

"The diversity of justice needs across our counties requires locally designed interventions. The county-by-county approach ensures that every Action Plan reflects the realities of the communities it serves while remaining firmly anchored in the Constitution and national policy," she said.

Justice Koome explained that the Kisii County AJS Model establishes a coordinated framework bringing together community institutions, state agencies and the Judiciary to improve collaboration in resolving disputes. The newly established AJS Suite and Registries at Kisii, Ogembo and Etago Law Courts will facilitate referrals between courts and community justice mechanisms, support public legal education and strengthen coordination among justice stakeholders.

She stressed that all Alternative Justice Systems must uphold human dignity, equality, inclusivity and the rights of every individual.

She welcomed the integration of constitutional safeguards within the Kisii County Action Plan, saying it successfully balances traditional dispute resolution with Kenya's constitutional values and human rights standards.

The Chief Justice also encouraged members of the public to actively participate in Court Users Committees, describing them as important platforms for engaging with the justice system and improving service delivery.

Justice Koome reaffirmed the Judiciary's commitment to working closely with county governments to expand judicial infrastructure and bring justice services closer to the people.

She also commended the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the Alternative Justice Systems Policy and thanked the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for supporting the implementation of county-specific AJS Action Plans.

The initiative advances the Judiciary's Social Transformation through Access to Justice (STAJ) blueprint, which promotes a multi-door approach to justice by ensuring every Kenyan has access to affordable, timely and people-centred justice.

Governor Arati Pledges County Support

Kisii Governor Simba Arati welcomed the initiative, describing it as a landmark achievement that will improve access to justice through community participation.

"This is a landmark event that underscores the county's commitment to improving access to justice through community involvement. Our collaboration with the Judiciary will greatly benefit the people of Kisii by enabling many disputes to be resolved more quickly and at a lower cost through Alternative Justice Systems."

The Governor noted that many minor disputes remain unresolved because of lengthy court processes, yet they can be effectively handled through Alternative Justice Systems.

He directed county officers to work closely with AJS officers to educate and empower residents on the benefits of the new justice framework.

Justice Through Dialogue

Chairperson of the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of Alternative Justice Systems, Justice Prof. Joel Ngugi, said justice begins when people choose dialogue instead of confrontation.

"Justice begins the moment people choose conversation over confrontation, listening over shouting, and reconciliation over revenge."

He said the Kisii County AJS Model creates an entire justice ecosystem by bringing together communities, traditional leaders and institutions to resolve disputes peacefully instead of relying solely on the courts.

Sustaining Community-Based Justice

Chief Registrar of the Judiciary Winfridah Mokaya emphasized that Alternative Justice Systems are not merely constitutional requirements but long-term investments in peaceful communities.

She thanked the Kisii County Government for partnering with the Judiciary in developing community-based justice solutions, saying the initiative should remain a joint effort to ensure its sustainability.

Elders Welcome the Initiative

Representing the Abagusii Council of Elders, Ebby Molly Gwaro said elders view justice as a process of restoring relationships, dignity and community harmony rather than simply determining who is right or wrong.

She said traditional justice systems must continue evolving to align with the Constitution, human rights and the principles of fairness, equality and inclusivity.

The Alternative Justice Systems programme has been implemented through a partnership between the Judiciary, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Union under the Digital Land Governance Programme, with the aim of expanding access to justice and strengthening community-led conflict resolution across Kenya.


CJ Martha Koome speaking during the launch of AJS in Kisii County


Kisii County governor Simba Arati speaking during the launch of AJS in Kisii


Justice Prof. Joel Ngugi , Chairperson of the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of AJS


Chief Registrar of the Judiciary Winfridah Mokaya speaking during the launch of AJS in Kisii County


Ebby Molly Gwaro Representing Abagusii Council of Elders

Politics They argued that no individual politician has the authority to direct or determine the future of another political party

Muturi, Munya and Kivuti reject Gachagua's call to dissolve parties

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Three opposition parties leaders yesterday reject a call to dissolve their entities for the one led by former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua.

Democratic Party (DP) leader Justin Muturi, Party of National Unity (PNU) leader Peter Munya and Mbus Party leader Lenny Kivuti jointly dismissed calls by Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP) leader Rigathi Gachagua for other Mt Kenya-based parties to dissolve.

They said doing so would undermine constitutional freedoms and the autonomy of political parties.

In a joint statement, the three leaders said they were responding to remarks attributed to Gachagua during a church service in Meru on July 26, where he reportedly urged DP, PNU, Umoja na Maendeleo Party and Mbus Party to fold and join DCP.

The leaders maintained that every registered political party is an independent institution established under the Constitution and the Political Parties Act, with its own membership, elected officials and governing organs.

They argued that no individual politician has the authority to direct or determine the future of another political party.

They said decisions on whether to merge, dissolve or enter into political alliances can only be made by the lawful organs of each party in accordance with their constitutions and the law.

Citing Article 38 of the Constitution, the leaders said every Kenyan has the right to form, join and participate in a political party of their choice, adding that these constitutional rights cannot be overridden by the ambitions or preferences of any political leader.

From left; Lenny Kivuti, Peter Munya and Justin Muturi during yesterday's press conference. | *Photo:* Courtesy.

While reaffirming their commitment to working with like-minded parties to provide an alternative to President William Ruto's administration, they insisted that any cooperation must be founded on mutual respect, consultation and voluntary agreement rather than coercion or political ultimatums.

The three leaders also accused Gachagua of applying double standards by calling for the dissolution of established parties while at the same time welcoming elected United Democratic Alliance (UDA) leaders and senior government officials into his political fold.

"If he genuinely believes in political realignment based on principle and the sovereign will of the people, then he should encourage those elected on UDA tickets to resign and seek fresh mandates through by-elections," they said, arguing that democracy should be strengthened through the ballot rather than negotiated defections.

They further rejected any suggestion that Gachagua had been mandated to speak on behalf of all political parties or the people of the Mt Kenya region, saying no meeting or consensus had ever conferred such authority on him.

The leaders noted that even former Presidents Jomo Kenyatta, Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta never sought to compel other parties to dissolve or claim exclusive political leadership of the region.

Although they said they had exercised restraint despite what they described as repeated attacks on their parties, they warned that such restraint should not be mistaken for acquiescence.

They urged Gachagua to abandon divisive rhetoric and instead embrace structured dialogue and respectful engagement with other political parties.

The statement also cautioned against attempts to dominate particular regions politically by discouraging the growth of other parties. The leaders said Kenyans should be free to join any political party without intimidation, adding that democracy thrives when citizens are allowed genuine political choice.

They concluded by saying there should be no double standards in political competition, insisting that it cannot be acceptable for leaders to join DCP while condemning those who choose to join other parties, and reaffirmed their shared agenda of pursuing prosperity through unity and respect for political diversity.

The only thing to fear is fear itself

Be not afraid, my child.
Be not afraid of anything
None can do any harm to you
Be bold and courageous.

Be strong to face any challenge.
The only thing to fear is fear itself.
Chase fear out of the boundary.
Let it not come near you.

If you are afraid of small things,
fear will capture you and destroy you.
Face everything with confidence.
If you give in to fear,

it will nip your growth in the bud.
Even if you fail no worries.
Rise up, and walk again.
Never fear of anything

Brinda. D
Creative writers
Teacher, GHS Melpattampakkam
Tanil Nadu, India

To the Best Grandfather

My grandfather is very, very special.
I love my grandfather,
and I enjoy every moment with him.
My grandfather is very loving and caring.
He is my best friend.
He also plays with me.
My grandfather is my guide.
I feel very happy with my grandfather.
He is the best grandfather in the world.
He tells me wonderful stories
and teaches me many good values.
He always encourages me
and makes me smile.
I love my grandfather very much.
I thank God for giving me such a wonderful grandfather.

MEENA SRI.S
CLASS 8-B
VKGHSS AYYANKALIPALAYAM TIRUPPUR

If you cannot manage stress you cannot handle future

If you cannot manage stress,
The future feels like a heavy test.
Small worries grow day by day ,
And steal your strength along the way.

Stress is a storm inside the mind,
Calm is the key we need to find.
Face your fears, be strong and true,
The future waits for a betteryou.

Ambuja
VIII-D

The pen over the broom

She was not born to sweep the floor,
To fade behind a closed-locked door,
To hold a broom and quietly stay,
And sweep her dreams and hopes away.
Her hands were made for greater things,
To turn the page, to give her wings,
To hold the pen and trace the line,
Where courage, truth, and power shine.
For every stroke of ink she writes,
Can break the dark and kindle lights,
Can challenge laws, rewrite the past,
And build a world designed to last.
So let the dust and shadows fall,
She answers now a higher call—
With ink in hand, her story told,
A pen is what she's meant to hold

S.P SAAI SAMYUKKTHA
JOHN DEWEY MATRIC HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL
TAMILNADU

Value of education

It is our right
Value of Education

Education is a gentle light,
Guiding us through day and night.
It lifts our dreams to heights so bright,
For every child it is our right.

It opens doors we cannot see,
Sets our hearts and minds free.
A seed of hope, a path so true,
Building courage to start anew.

Books become our dearest friends,
Teaching lessons that never end.
Knowledge shapes our voice and mind,
Making us strong, making us kind.

Let every child learn, dream, and grow
Give them wings and watch them glow.
A precious gift, a life's pure light,
A precious gift, a human right.

V. JAYANTHI
Graduate teacher
Creative writer
Chengalpattu district

The only permanent thing in life is change

Change leads to progress
Progress leads to success
Success becomes our address
Our address egresses to our progress.

Change in life is permanent
Growth is its prominent
The one who accepts it will be eminent
Then his success is imminent.

A simple pupa changes to a beautiful butterfly
A small seed changes to a tall tree
Little drops of water change to a mighty ocean
A kind word changes the mind of an unkind man.

If a river accepts the change
It will widen its range
one becomes strange if denies change
Let's accept the change and widen our range.
...

Penned by
RANGANATHAN E
B.T asst(Eng)
Marwar Govt Boys Hss,Acharapakkam

The voice that says "I can"

There is a voice deep inside me.
It whispers, "Keep moving forward."
It gives me courage when I am afraid.
It reminds me that every step matters.
It turns failure into a fresh beginning.
It teaches me to believe in myself.
It fills my heart with quiet confidence.
It helps me face every challenge.

It tells me to learn from every mistake.
It shows me that hope never fades.
It reminds me to never give up.
It leads me toward my dreams.

It grows stronger with every effort.
That voice is my greatest strength.
It always says, "I can."

V.Joshika
Grade 8

Music festival “Talent has opened doors for footballers, athletes, musicians, and countless others,” Wamalwa said.

Bikeke school shines at national music festival

The Trans Nzoia institution reaches Kibabii University stage after a journey that began at sub-county level in May

Students at bikeke comprehensive school at Kenya national music festivals

BY Daniel Kipchumba
@themtkenyatimes

Bikeke Comprehensive School in Trans Nzoia County yesterday earned its place in the national spotlight as it competed at the Kenya National Music Festival, held this year at Kibabii University in Bungoma.

The road to the national stage was long and hard-won. The school’s journey began in May at the sub-county music competitions hosted at Mufutu Comprehensive School, where more than ten entries qualified for the county round. At the county competitions held at Kitale Comprehensive School, the team held firm, with six items advancing to the regional stage in Eldoret. The regionals proved the sternest test yet, but under music trainer Dennis Misoi — supported by colleagues Noel Eyauma and Grace Onamu — the school’s Class 224 Boys’ Choir came through to secure a coveted place at the nationals.

Behind the scenes, school principal Ronald Francis Toili Wamalwa invested countless hours ensuring the team was ready for the national stage. His dedication reflects an institutional culture that has long treated music and drama not as extras but as core expressions of who the school is.

“We believe in promoting cultural diversity and nurturing the full potential of every learner,” Wamalwa said. “Competitions like these give our students a platform to discover themselves and grow.”

That philosophy runs deep at Bikeke. In keeping with the demands of the Competency Based Education curriculum, the school has broadened its co-curricular programme well beyond the arts. A committed group of coaches — Phylis Jepkorir, Diana Imelda, Martin Lusweti, Daniel Wasike, Mercy Muriithi, and Kemboi — oversee ball games across disciplines, while deputy principal Bernard Nyakona and senior teachers Joseph Lumuli and Verah Katikit have been consistent champions of extracurricular engagement at every level.

At the governance level, board chairman John Wekesa Wamalwa and the school’s board of management have made talent development a deliberate priority, viewing sport, music, and the arts as serious pathways to success rather than sideline activities.

“Talent has opened doors for footballers, athletes, musicians, and countless others,” Wamalwa said. “We want every student at this school to know that what they carry inside them matters — and that this is the place to develop it.”

For the students of Bikeke Comprehensive School, the journey to Kibabii University is more than a competition result. It is proof that consistent effort, strong mentorship, and genuine institutional belief in young people can take a school from a sub-county hall in May all the way to the national stage.

Bikeke comprehensive school students

Politics "I wish to formally announce that I will not be vying for the position of Governor of Murang'a County," Kamau said.

Jamleck Kamau drops Murang'a governor bid, throws weight behind United Alternative Government

BY MKT Correspondent
@themtkenyatimes

Former Kigumo MP Jamleck Kamau has withdrawn from the race for the Murang'a governorship, ending months of speculation over his political future and pledging his support to the opposition-aligned United Alternative Government.

In a statement released yesterday, Kamau said the decision followed "deep reflection, consultation and prayers," adding that leadership was about serving the people rather than merely seeking elective office.

"I wish to formally announce that I will not be vying for the position of Governor of Murang'a County," Kamau said.

He added, "This decision has been made with a clear conscience and a firm conviction that leadership is ultimately about serving the people, not merely seeking elective office. My commitment to the people of Murang'a and to Kenya remains unwavering."

Jamleck Kamau

Kamau said he would instead dedicate his efforts to supporting the United Alternative Government, a coalition bringing together opposition leaders ahead of the 2027 General Election.

He said the coalition's vision was to build "a united, just, accountable and prosperous Kenya" through good governance, integrity and people-centred leadership.

"I therefore humbly ask all my supporters, friends and well-wishers to embrace this decision and continue standing with me as we pursue a greater cause for renewal of our nation," he said.

The announcement marks another shift in Murang'a's rapidly evolving political landscape, where alignments ahead of the 2027 elections continue to reshape the contest for the county's top seat.

Kamau had in recent months been widely viewed as one of the leading figures associated with former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's political camp after joining the Democracy for the Citizens Party (DCP).

His frequent appearances alongside Gachagua had fuelled expectations that he would challenge for the governorship on the party's ticket. Earlier this year, he had also announced a temporary withdrawal from active politics before returning to the public political arena.

His withdrawal leaves the race largely centred on incumbent Governor Irungu Kang'ata, who has already confirmed he will seek a second term.

Although elected on the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) ticket in 2022, Kang'ata announced in May that he would not defend his seat under the ruling party, citing policy and political differences. He has since declared that he will seek re-election on a DCP ticket while maintaining links with the broader opposition alliance.

Murang'a has also attracted interest from several other politicians expected to join the race as parties begin identifying their candidates ahead of the official campaign period.

Political observers have also pointed to possible bids by senior county and national leaders, although several prospective aspirants are yet to formally declare their intentions.

Kamau urged his supporters to remain united despite his withdrawal, saying the focus should now shift to the broader objective of changing the country's leadership.

"Let us put Kenya first, rise above personal interests, and work together to leave a better country for future generations," he said.

Kamau's decision is expected to trigger fresh political realignments in Murang'a, with attention now turning to how his supporters and political network will be integrated into the opposition coalition's strategy as campaigns for the 2027 General Election gather momentum.

Tanzania The compact presented at the State House launch places the private sector at the centre of Tanzania's development agenda

Tanzania rolls out Vision 2050 as Kenya readies its own blueprint

BY James Mwangi
@themtkenyatimes

Tanzania launched the implementation instruments for its National Development Vision 2050 on Sunday at State House in Dar es Salaam, as Kenya prepares to begin its own post-Vision 2030 national conversation next Wednesday, August 12.

The compact presented at the State House launch places the private sector at the centre of Tanzania's development agenda, with President Samia Suluhu Hassan confirming that approximately 70 per cent of Vision 2050's implementation will depend on private investment. Tanzania hopes to build a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2050, up from its present size of less than US$100 billion.

The instruments unveiled yesterday include national planning guidelines, frameworks for the approval and monitoring of development projects, and a five-year communications strategy for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31. Vision 2050 was officially launched by Samia on July 17 last year in Dodoma, with implementation formally beginning on July 1 this year as the predecessor Tanzania Development Vision 2025 expired. Under Vision 2025, Tanzania achieved notable milestones including attaining lower-middle-income status, nearly tripling GDP per capita from US$453 in 2000 to US$1,277 in 2023, and expanding access to education, healthcare and water supply.

At the State House launch, Samia was direct about expectations. "Vision 2050 is not a government document. It is a national vision. It reflects the dreams, aspirations and commitments of all Tanzanians," she said, adding: "Let this vision not gather dust like many past plans."

For the 2026/27 financial year alone, Tanzania estimates development financing needs of TZS 86.3 trillion, with the private sector expected to contribute TZS 60.1 trillion — or 69.6 per cent of the total.

Across the border, Kenya is taking its first formal steps toward replacing Vision 2030. President William Ruto announced last Thursday that the government will formally launch a national conversation on August 12 — next Wednesday — describing it as the most consequential public participation exercise since the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution. The process is expected to bring together all 47 counties, every institution of the Republic, and representatives from across society, with the aim of producing a citizen-driven national development charter by the end of 2026.

The launch at State House in Dar es Salaam comes as Kenya prepares to begin nationwide consultations on its post-Vision 2030 development blueprint, scheduled for official launch on August 12 | *Photo:* State House Tanzania

A team led by Kisumu Governor Anyang' Nyong'o and Japanese scholar Hiroyuki Hino has been commissioned to develop foundational guidelines for the successor blueprint. Ruto has been candid about Vision 2030's shortfalls. "Vision 2030 set a target of Kenya becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2030. So far, we are off target," he told the nation — framing the gap not as failure but as a platform for a more durable, constitutionally anchored successor.

The parallel processes in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam reflect a broader regional shift: East Africa's two largest economies are rethinking long-range planning not as a top-down government exercise but as a national undertaking, built on public participation and private-sector partnership. Tanzania is already in execution mode. Kenya's conversation starts next week. The distance between those two positions will be worth watching.


DO YOU WANT TO GET PUBLISHED?
ARE YOU A WRITER OR CORPORATE?
Let Professional Editors and Authors turn your story into a Dream Book.
THRILLERS - FICTION - FACTION - BIOGRAPHIES - TRAVELOGUES - HUMOUR- COFFEE TABLE - BROCHURES
London-based contract Publishers for independent and self-publish authors.
We offer one-stop top notch Editing, Expert Design, Proof Reading, Book Covers, Artwork, Digital, Litho Printing, E-Books, Corporate Brochures and UK ISBN number. Reasonable costs.
We print and deliver books. Authors retain 100% sales profits.
AFRICAN WOMEN IN EUROPE
A reflection of the strength and positivity of African women and men
BIBI PIPI NA MAUA WARIDI
Corona Cermak
THAT'S LIFE!
MICHAEL MATATU AT LARGE
SHAMLAL PURI
Footprints
NAMOSAL 64-74 REUNION
NATIONAL MODEL SCHOOL
SELECTED PORTFOLIO
DUBAI DREAMS
SHAMLAL PURI
Dubai On Wheels
Shamlal Puri
AXIS OF EVIL
BLOOD MONEY
SHAMLAL PURI
DUBAI DREAMS
The Rough Road to Riches
SHAMLAL PURI
BEST SELLER NOVELS
THE ILLEGALS
SHAMLAL PURI
DENIED
TRIANGLE OF TERROR
Shamlal Puri
Axis of Evil
BLOOD MONEY
Shamlal Puri
The Cosmopolitan Nomad
A Globetrotter's Story
Karim
G R Ladak
MY LITTLE BOOK OF Christian Poems
TONY TOKUNBO ETEKA FERNANDEZ
The Crownbird Publishers logo and imprint owned by Adlink International (1989) Media Group London
Copies of some books available for sale: hard copy/ digital. Contact us:
media@adlinkinternational.com
Email Subject: Crownbird Books
Crownbird Publishers
ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP BOOKS IMPRINT
INTERNATIONAL BOOKS & MAGAZINES PUBLISHERS
ADLINK INTERNATIONAL (1989) MEDIA GROUP
Books Division
16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0AF (UK)
Tel: 44 330 606 1438
Email: media@adlinkinternational.com
www.adlinkinternational.com

Tech We speak of “training” models as if they were athletes being coached, when the more accurate image is of furnaces being stoked

The thirst of technology: When innovation’s chorus drowns the rivers

By: Jerameel Kevins Owuor Odhiambo
@themtkenyatimes

When innovation’s chorus drowns the rivers

In 2023, United States data centers alone consumed 17.4 billion gallons of water directly for cooling roughly the annual household use of 160,000 American homes while their indirect water footprint through electricity generation added another 211 billion gallons. Globally, data centers accounted for an estimated 560 billion liters that same year. Training a single large language model like GPT-3 has been calculated to evaporate around 700,000 liters of freshwater on-site, with total operational footprints reaching several million liters. These are not projections whispered in academic footnotes; they are measured and estimated realities of the machines already humming. Nevertheless, the public conversation remains almost entirely about speed, capability, and market disruption. Innovation is celebrated as destiny. Water is treated as an afterthought.

This asymmetry is not accidental. It is a failure of imagination and priority dressed up as progress. We have become fluent in the language of breakthroughs parameters, tokens, agents, multimodal leaps while remaining nearly mute on the evaporative cost of keeping those silicon minds from melting. The servers do not think in metaphors; they generate heat. Heat demands cooling. Evaporative cooling systems, still widely used, turn clean water into vapor that does not return to the local watershed. Up to 85 percent of the water drawn for many facilities simply vanishes into the atmosphere. In arid basins and drought-stressed regions, that disappearance is not abstract. It is aquifers drawn down, municipal supplies strained, and communities competing with hyperscale facilities for the same finite resource.

Consider the correlation that should trouble anyone who claims intellectual honesty. The same decade that produced generative models capable of drafting legislation, diagnosing disease patterns, and generating photorealistic imagery has also seen corporate water consumption by major technology firms climb steeply Google’s data-center water use rising from roughly 4.3 billion gallons in 2021 toward figures exceeding 6 billion and, in later reports, higher still; Microsoft recording double-digit percentage increases in consecutive years. Efficiency metrics improve in isolation (lower liters per kilowatt-hour at individual sites), yet absolute consumption rises because demand for computation grows faster than efficiency can compensate. This is the classic rebound effect wearing a silicon mask. We celebrate the cleverness of the algorithm while ignoring the thermodynamic bill paid in water.

Literary devices are not ornament here; they are diagnostic tools. The data center is a modern Leviathan vast, opaque, and thirsty whose appetite is measured in megawatts and megalitres. Innovation is the bright carnival that draws the crowd; the rivers and aquifers are the quiet stagehands whose labor is never applauded. We speak of “training” models as if they were athletes being coached, when the more accurate image is of furnaces being stoked. Each query, each image generation, each fine-tuning run is a small sip that, multiplied across hundreds of millions of daily interactions, becomes a river diverted. Estimates vary widely some corporate statements claim fractions of a teaspoon per average query, while independent analyses have placed medium-length exchanges in the range of hundreds of milliliters when both on-site cooling and power-generation water are counted but the direction of travel is unambiguous. Scale transforms the trivial into the consequential.

Why the silence? Part of the answer is narrative capture. Technology discourse has long privileged carbon over water because carbon fits the existing climate narrative and is easier to offset with certificates and renewable power purchase agreements. Water is stubbornly local. A megawatt of renewable electricity in a wet region carries a different water intensity than the same megawatt in a desert. Optimizing solely for carbon can worsen water stress, a trade-off that single-metric sustainability reports conveniently obscure. Another part is opacity. Model cards routinely list energy or carbon estimates; water withdrawal and consumption figures remain scarce, inconsistent, or aggregated beyond usefulness. Without transparent, facility-level data, public accountability is impossible and internal innovation toward water-sparing designs is under-incentivized.

There is also a deeper cultural reason. We have internalized the myth of dematerialization—the idea that digital services float free of physical constraint. The cloud is imagined as ethereal rather than as rows of servers in concrete halls that must be cooled continuously. This myth is intellectually lazy. Every bit processed has a thermodynamic cost. Every model trained or inferred has an embodied and operational water footprint that includes not only cooling but the water used to generate the electricity and, upstream, to manufacture the chips. Ignoring that chain is not sophisticated; it is willful blindness.

Original insight demands we refuse the false binary. The choice is not innovation versus environment. The choice is whether innovation will be defined by raw capability alone or by capability achieved within planetary boundaries. Water is not a soft externality. Freshwater suitable for human use is already under pressure from population growth, climate-driven drought, and aging infrastructure. By 2030, global freshwater demand is projected to outstrip supply by roughly 40 percent in many assessments. Placing rapidly expanding, water-intensive infrastructure into stressed basins without rigorous local accounting is not progress; it is extraction wearing the costume of the future.

Call the silence what it is: a failure of intellectual and moral seriousness. Boards and engineers who can optimize matrix multiplications to the edge of physical possibility somehow cannot, or will not, treat water as a first-class design constraint equal to latency or cost. Policymakers who draft AI safety frameworks that emphasize bias and existential risk often omit water and energy intensity from the core requirements. Journalists and analysts who produce breathless coverage of model releases rarely demand water-usage disclosures with the same intensity they demand benchmark scores. The result is a public square filled with talk of intelligence and almost empty of talk about the rivers that make the intelligence possible.

Deep insight requires correlation across domains. The same computational intensity that enables medical breakthroughs and scientific discovery also concentrates environmental burden in the places where data centers are sited often regions already facing scarcity. Benefits are diffuse and global; costs are concentrated and local. That asymmetry is political as much as technical. Communities in water-stressed areas have begun to push back, not because they oppose technology, but because they recognize that infinite digital expansion collides with finite hydrological reality. Treating their concerns as Luddite is itself a failure of acuity.

There are technical paths forward: air-side economizers, liquid cooling loops that recirculate rather than evaporate, higher operating temperatures, siting decisions that match climate and power-generation water intensity, and genuine water-positive commitments that restore more than they consume. Some operators have begun publishing better metrics and designing for near-zero evaporative loss. These are necessary but insufficient without cultural change. As long as the dominant narrative frames every new capability as an unqualified good and every environmental question as a secondary constraint to be managed later, absolute consumption will continue to climb.

The words we choose shape the future we build. When we speak only of innovation, we license expansion without reckoning. When we insist on speaking of water with the same precision and urgency we apply to parameters and performance, we force the design space to enlarge. True mastery is not the ability to make machines that answer every question. It is the wisdom to ask whether the answers are worth the rivers they cost and then to engineer systems that do not force that choice. The servers will keep running. The question is whether the aquifers will.

The writer is a social commentator

Governance In a healthy democracy, parliament should make laws that apply fairly to everyone. The executive should implement those laws

Beyond Plato and Hobbes: When those who Govern become the greatest threat to Governance

BY Fredrick Chelimo
@themtkenyatimes

The greatest challenge facing modern democracy is not simply the absence of good leaders. It is the existence of political systems that can be manipulated by those who occupy political office to protect their own power, privileges and interests. This is the uncomfortable truth that must be confronted if we are serious about political transformation. A country can have an excellent constitution, independent institutions, sophisticated laws and regular elections, yet still fail to achieve good governance if the political class continually redesigns the rules of the game to protect itself.

Plato worried about the dangers of ignorant and selfish rulers. Thomas Hobbes worried about the chaos that would emerge when there was no strong authority to maintain order. Machiavelli understood that political power could be pursued and preserved through methods that were often far removed from morality. But the modern world has created a new political dilemma that perhaps requires an entirely new philosophical response: what happens when those entrusted with governing become the greatest obstacle to the effective functioning of the institutions of government?.

In a healthy democracy, parliament should make laws that apply fairly to everyone. The executive should implement those laws. The judiciary should interpret them independently. Oversight institutions should hold power accountable. Citizens should ultimately remain sovereign. Yet in many countries, including Kenya, the political class has accumulated privileges and protections that can create the impression that elected office is not a temporary public responsibility but a permanent social elevation.

Politicians sometimes design systems in which they appear to live by different rules from the citizens they represent. They determine their own remuneration, create generous benefits, negotiate retirement packages, enjoy extensive privileges and surround themselves with titles and ceremonial honours that can gradually create a culture of political entitlement. The ordinary citizen is told to tighten the belt, while political institutions can appear increasingly comfortable with expanding their own privileges. This creates a dangerous psychological distance between the governed and those who govern.

A teacher may spend an entire career educating generations of children and retire with modest security. A nurse may spend decades caring for the sick under difficult conditions. A farmer may work from dawn to dusk yet remain vulnerable to poor markets, drought and rising costs. A police officer may risk his or her life protecting society. A civil servant may dedicate decades to public service. Yet political office can sometimes offer individuals extraordinary financial and social rewards within a comparatively short period. The question is not whether elected leaders should be compensated fairly. They should. The question is whether public office should become a pathway to privileges that are disconnected from the economic realities of the citizens who finance the state.

Democracy begins to lose its moral authority when citizens conclude that politics is no longer about service but about access. The danger becomes even greater when political leaders weaken the very institutions designed to hold them accountable. An independent judiciary can be portrayed as hostile to government. Oversight bodies can be starved of resources or subjected to political pressure. Parliament can become more interested in protecting its institutional privileges than scrutinising the executive. Political parties can become personal vehicles rather than democratic organisations. Public appointments can reward loyalty instead of competence.

In such circumstances, the problem is not merely bad leadership. It is institutional capture by political interests. This is why the next stage of political philosophy must go beyond Plato's philosopher-king and Hobbes's powerful sovereign. We do not need a new generation of rulers who are merely more intelligent or more powerful. We need a political system designed on the assumption that every human being who acquires power is capable of abusing it. The solution is therefore not to search endlessly for perfect leaders. It is to construct imperfectible institutions that make it difficult for even powerful leaders to do great harm.

The central principle should be simple: political power must never be allowed to become self-protecting power. No arm of government should be permitted to design rules that effectively place itself above accountability. No elected institution should have unlimited authority to determine its own financial privileges without independent scrutiny. Public remuneration should be guided by transparent and objective principles that reflect the economic capacity of the country. Retirement benefits should be fair, sustainable and consistent with the broader public service system. The dignity of public office should come from service, not from extravagant titles, privileges or material rewards.

A member of parliament should be respected because they represent the people—not because the title makes them appear socially superior to the people. A cabinet secretary should be honoured because they serve the nation—not because their office places them beyond criticism. A president should be respected because they embody the constitutional authority of the republic—not because they are treated as politically infallible. This distinction is fundamental. In a democracy, leaders are servants of the state, not owners of the state.

Kenya's political transformation must therefore involve a re-engineering of the relationship between politics and the other arms of government. Parliament must become a genuine institution of legislation and oversight rather than an arena where political interests dominate national debate. The executive must be powerful enough to govern but constrained enough to remain accountable. The judiciary must be protected from political interference. Independent commissions must be genuinely independent. The media and civil society must remain free to question power.

But institutional reform alone will not be enough. The citizen must also be re-engineered from a passive voter into an active constitutional participant. Citizens must begin to ask different questions. Instead of asking, "Which tribe is this leader from?" they should ask, "What has this leader delivered?" Instead of celebrating political generosity during campaigns, they should ask how public resources were managed over the previous five years. Instead of being impressed by motorcades, titles and political theatrics, citizens should examine competence, integrity and measurable results.

The political class survives when citizens reward performance theatrics more than actual performance. The future therefore belongs to a new political culture in which public office is understood as a temporary trust. Leaders should enter office knowing that they will leave it, and institutions should be designed to ensure that their departure does not threaten the stability of the country. The state must be stronger than the individual, the constitution stronger than the politician, and the citizen stronger than the political party.

This is the foundation of what can be called Democratic Stewardship—a political philosophy in which power is understood not as personal ownership but as temporary custodianship of the common good. Its principles should be clear: power must be legitimate; power must be limited; power must be transparent; power must be accountable; power must deliver; and power must always remember the generations yet unborn.

Such a philosophy would retain Plato's emphasis on wisdom, Hobbes's concern for security and Machiavelli's understanding of political reality, but it would add a defining principle of modern democracy: the dignity, rights and sovereignty of the citizen. The ultimate test of political transformation is therefore not whether we can find better politicians. It is whether we can build a political system in which good governance does not depend entirely on finding good politicians. That is the real revolution Kenya and the world need.

The political class should not be the enemy of government. It should be the first servant of government, constitution and citizen. And perhaps the most important lesson for our generation is this: the greatness of a democracy is not measured by how highly it elevates its leaders, but by how effectively it prevents any leader from rising above the law, the constitution and the people.

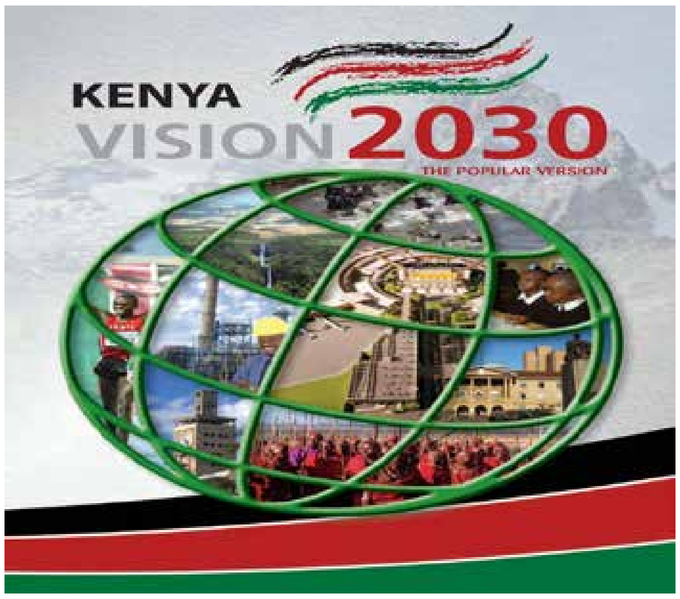
That is the political philosophy of the future. Not the rule of philosopher-kings. Not the absolute power of sovereigns. Not the politics of Machiavellian survival. But a system in which institutions are wiser than individuals, the constitution is stronger than politicians, citizens are more powerful than political parties, and public office is permanently understood as a privilege of service rather than a licence for entitlement.

Only then can democracy move from being a periodic contest for power to becoming what it was always meant to be: a permanent system of government by, for and accountable to the people.

Vision Institutional trust is one of the most valuable assets any nation can possess. When institutions are respected, citizens develop confidence in public decision-making

Beyond Vision 2030: Why the crafting of Vision 2060 should be transparent, inclusive and institutionally grounded

BY Paul Kinyanjui
@themtkenyatimes



Kenya has every reason to celebrate bold, long-term development planning. National visions provide direction, inspire hope, and guide public policy across generations. In that spirit, I sincerely appreciate all those reported to have contributed to the development of Vision 2060, as referenced by The ODM Party Leader. The willingness to think beyond the present and imagine Kenya's future is commendable.

However, the success of any national vision depends not only on the quality of its ideas but also on the credibility, inclusivity, and transparency of the process through which it is developed. A vision intended to shape the destiny of future generations should command broad public confidence from its inception.

It is in that spirit that I respectfully seek clarification on several issues that are of legitimate public interest.

Was there adequate prior public awareness before the drafting process began? Were Kenyans accorded civic education on the purpose, scope, and objectives of Vision 2060? Was there meaningful public participation that enabled citizens, professionals, institutions, youth, women, persons with disabilities, and representatives from all regions of Kenya to contribute their views?

Equally important is the question of the composition of the drafting team. Were the individuals involved identified through an open, transparent, and inclusive process? Were any appointments or nominations publicly communicated through the appropriate legal or administrative procedures? Was the draft itself made available for public review before being presented? These are reasonable questions because transparency strengthens legitimacy, while openness nurtures public ownership.

It has also been claimed that no Gazette Notice has been identified confirming the appointment or nomination of individuals involved in the Vision 2060 drafting process. If this is indeed the case, official clarification would help strengthen transparency, accountability, and public confidence.

These concerns are not intended to diminish the value of Vision 2060. Rather, they seek to ensure that any long-term national development agenda enjoys the confidence of the people it is intended to serve.

The discussion has also been influenced by recent public observations made by former Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury and former Central Bank Governor Prof. Njuguna Ndung'u. He emphasized the importance of protecting strong and independent public institutions and cautioned against practices that may weaken institutional integrity through overreach or excessive micromanagement. Whether one agrees with every aspect of his observations or not, they remind us that enduring national development is built upon trusted institutions rather than personalities.

Institutional trust is one of the most valuable assets any nation can possess. When institutions are respected, citizens develop confidence in public decision-making. When transparency becomes the norm, suspicion gives way to participation. Conversely, when important national initiatives are perceived to have been developed without adequate public engagement, unnecessary questions and doubts inevitably arise.

If there is official documentation explaining the establishment of the Vision 2060 drafting process, making it publicly accessible would greatly enhance confidence in the initiative. Likewise, if the draft has reached a stage suitable for public engagement, its publication would encourage constructive national dialogue rather than speculation. Openness should never be viewed as a weakness; it is a hallmark of democratic governance.

The experience of Vision 2030 also offers valuable lessons. As one of Kenya's most significant long-term policy frameworks, it demonstrated the importance of broad stakeholder engagement in national planning. Those who were involved in its development may similarly find it worthwhile to continue sharing insights on the processes, consultations, and safeguards that informed its preparation. Such institutional memory can help improve future planning processes while preserving public trust.

There is also a broader constitutional principle at stake. Kenya's Constitution recognizes public participation, transparency, accountability, and good governance as essential national values. Long-term policy frameworks that seek to influence generations of Kenyans should embody these principles not only in their objectives but also in the manner in which they are conceived, developed, and presented to the public.

As the national conversation continues, care should also be taken to ensure that Vision 2060 does not become another point of political polarization. National development visions should unite citizens around shared aspirations rather than divide them along partisan lines. If different political formations eventually present alternative long-term vision policy proposals, the competition should be one of ideas, evidence, and implementation—not secrecy or political rivalry.

Ultimately, Kenya's future will depend less on the title of a development blueprint than on the strength of the institutions responsible for implementing it. Strong institutions require leaders who embrace servant leadership, accountability, delegation, transparency, respect for constitutional processes, and confidence in the competence of others. These values cultivate institutional trust, which remains indispensable for sustainable national development.

As citizens, our responsibility is not merely to applaud ambitious visions but also to ask thoughtful questions that strengthen them. Genuine transparency welcomes scrutiny because it transforms public curiosity into public confidence. The more inclusive the process, the stronger the legitimacy of the outcome.

May Vision 2030 continue to inspire national progress. May any future development vision be guided by openness, inclusivity, and constitutional values. Above all, may Kenya continue to build institutions that earn and sustain the trust of her people. God bless Vision 2030,God bless all future national development initiatives,God bless Vision 2060.

God bless Kenya.

Paul Kinyanjui is a freelance Researcher, Analyst, Critic, Writer on Emerging Issues and Trends with an aim to Create Awareness, Educate, Enlighten, Empower and Inspire
E-Mail: Kinyanjuipaul2030@gmail.com

Parents ....

The two hearts that never stopped beating for me!!!

Ilhomova Zahro and father

BY Ilhomova Zahro
@themtkenyatimes

There is no love in this world that is as pure, selfless, and unconditional as the love of parents. From the very first moment we open our eyes, they become our protectors, our teachers, and our biggest supporters. Before we even learn to speak or walk, they spend countless sleepless nights taking care of us, making sure we are safe, healthy, and happy. They ask for nothing in return except to see us smile and grow into good people.

Parents sacrifice more than we can ever imagine. They hide their own pain so that we can live without worries. They work long hours, ignore their own dreams, and carry heavy responsibilities just to give us opportunities they never had. Sometimes they skip buying something for themselves so they can buy something for us. Sometimes they pretend to be strong even when they are exhausted because they do not want us to see their struggles.

As children, we often fail to notice these sacrifices. We complain when we do not get what we want, we become impatient, and sometimes we even raise our voices at the very people who have spent their entire lives protecting us. We forget that every wrinkle on their faces tells the story of years of hard work, every grey hair reminds us of the stress they endured for our happiness, and every tired smile reflects the endless love they have for us.

A mother's love is beyond words. She is the one who carries us before we are born, comforts us when we cry, and continues to worry about us no matter how old we become. Even when she is tired, she still finds the strength to ask whether we have eaten or whether we are feeling well. Her prayers follow us wherever we go, and her heart never stops loving us.

A father may not always express his feelings openly, but his love is just as deep. He silently carries the weight of responsibility, works tirelessly to provide for the family, and stands behind us every step of the way. Many fathers hide their emotions because they believe their children need to see strength, not tears. Yet behind that strength is a heart filled with endless care and affection.

One of the saddest truths in life is that we often realize the true value of our parents only when time has already taken away the chance to thank them properly. We become busy chasing success, money, and dreams, believing that we will have plenty of time to spend with them later. But life is unpredictable. One day, the phone may stop ringing with their familiar voice. One day, the chair where they used to sit may remain empty forever. On that day, no amount of wealth, success, or regret will bring them back.

If your parents are still alive, treasure every single moment with them. Sit beside them, listen to their stories, hold their hands, and tell them how much they mean to you. Say "I love you" before it is too late. Make them proud not only through your achievements but also through your kindness, respect, and gratitude. They do not expect expensive gifts or grand celebrations. Most parents simply want to know that their children love and appreciate them.

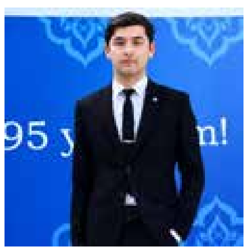
Never forget that your parents believed in you before anyone else did. They celebrated your first words, your first steps, your first success, and stood beside you during your failures. When the whole world doubted you, they continued to believe in your potential. They were your safe place when life became difficult and your source of hope when everything seemed impossible.

One day, we will understand that the greatest treasure we ever had was not money, fame, or material possessions—it was the love, guidance, and presence of our parents. Their love cannot be replaced, bought, or forgotten. It lives in our hearts forever.

Love your parents while they are still here. Respect them even when you disagree with them. Forgive them for their imperfections because they have always tried to give you the best they could. Hug them often, pray for them every day, and never let a single day pass without showing your gratitude.

Competition **If we imagine the market as a large stage, service companies are its performers, while customers are the audience**

Competition – the heart of the service sector



BY MKT REPORTER
@themtkenyatimes

There are many forces that keep life moving. In nature, the wind moves the clouds, rivers keep water flowing, and the heart gives life to the human body. In the economy, one of these life-giving forces is competition. Especially in the service sector, it is impossible to imagine growth and development without competition.

If we imagine the market as a large stage, service companies are its performers, while customers are the audience. The businesses that earn customers' trust, provide high-quality services, and constantly introduce new ideas are the ones that succeed. That is why competition encourages companies to improve themselves, work harder, and become better every day.

Competition can also be explained through another simple comparison. If we think of the economy as a vast sea, businesses are the ships sailing on it. The market is the water, while competition is the wind that pushes the ships forward. The wind blows for every ship equally, but choosing the direction, controlling the speed, and reaching the destination depend on the captain's skill. In the same way, competition creates opportunities for all businesses, but how they use those opportunities depends on their management, strategy, and effort.

The rapid growth of mobile banking, online education, e-commerce, fast delivery services, modern hotels, and customer-friendly services is not a coincidence. Behind all these improvements lies healthy competition for customers' trust. Today, customers no longer choose only a service; they also value convenience, attention, and reliability.

Competition benefits not only entrepreneurs but also every consumer. It improves service quality, keeps prices reasonable, expands customer choice, and encourages innovation. Wherever competition exists, there is continuous improvement, creativity, and progress.

In conclusion, competition is one of the main driving forces behind business growth. However, each company chooses its own path to success. For this reason, healthy competition plays a vital role in increasing efficiency in the service sector, gaining customers' trust, and ensuring sustainable economic development.

Working station

Bozorov Jobir is a third-year Economics student at the Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service, Coordinator of Intellectual Projects of the Youth Union, Head of the Inclusive Media Club, winner of international economics Olympiads, volunteer of the Uzbekistan Volunteers Association, and an active young researcher.

Sports >> *K'Ogalo survive a red card and nerve-shredding shootout to down Sudan's Al Hilal and book a place in Friday's decider in Kigali

Gor Mahia reach Cecafa final in penalty thriller

By **Martin Weche**

Gor Mahia

Gor Mahia are through to the final of the 2026 Cecafa Kagame Cup after beating Sudan's Al Hilal 8-7 on penalties, following a tense 1-1 draw, at the Kigali Pelé Stadium on Tuesday.

It was a night that had everything — an own goal, a red card, extra time, and a shootout that went deep into sudden death — before K'Ogalo finally held their nerve to advance to Friday's final. For a club that had not reached the Kagame Cup final since 2015, when they lost to Tanzania's Azam in Dar es Salaam, the relief in the Kenyan camp was palpable.

Gor Mahia had an old score to settle. In the 2024 edition of the tournament in Tanzania, Al Hilal had beaten them 2-0 in the group stage, and the Sudanese side went on to finish third. This time, with a final berth at stake, Charles Akonnor's men were not about to let the same story play out twice.

The opening hour was a cagey, tactical affair. Gor Mahia took the lead on 36 minutes through an own goal by Al Hilal's Steven Ebuela, only for the Sudanese to level eight minutes later through Ansumana Samura. From that point, both defences dug in, the game tightening into the sort of grinding contest that tests squad depth as much as individual quality.

Akonnor's preparations had already been disrupted before a ball was kicked. Gor Mahia suffered three significant injury blows ahead of the knockout stage — winger Samuel Kapen was ruled out for up to a year with a torn ligament, while forward Patrick Essombe and defender Sylvester Owino face two months on the sidelines. That the team held together under such circumstances speaks to the character Akonnor has built in the squad.

The drama deepened in extra time when Jackson Dwang' received a straight red card for foul play, reducing Gor Mahia to ten men at the worst possible moment. It was a scenario that would have broken less composed sides. Instead, the ten men dug in, repelled whatever Al Hilal could muster, and took the game to the spot.

K'Ogalo held their nerve to seal victory and advance to Friday's final on August 7, 2026. The shootout scoreline of 8-7 tells its own story of a contest that refused to yield easily, with both goalkeepers — and the occasion itself — demanding the best from every player who stepped up.

The tactical duel between Akonnor, who favours attacking intensity and flexibility, and Al Hilal's Guy Bukasa, who relies on defensive structure and game management, was always likely to produce something tight. In the end, it came down to who wanted it more under the lights, and Gor Mahia had their answer ready.

The Kenyan side, three-time Kagame Cup winners, topped Group A — navigating a demanding pool that included Uganda's Vipers and Rwanda's APR — to earn their place in the semi-finals. Their journey to Tuesday's match was itself a study in resilience, including a 1-0 win over Djibouti's Garde Républicaine played out with ten men for the final 18 minutes.

Gor Mahia now await the winners of the second semi-final between South Sudan's Jamus FC and Rwanda's Rayon Sports, the tournament hosts. The winners of the final will collect US$30,000, with the runners-up taking home US$20,000.

For Akonnor, a Ghanaian coach who has steadily built belief in a squad stretched thin by injuries and a congested fixture list, reaching the final represents validation of a particular kind. For the Gor Mahia faithful, who have waited more than a decade to see their club lift the Kagame Cup again, Friday cannot come quickly enough.

Sports >> *Kenya finish bottom of Group A without a point or a goal, but Odemba vows the painful experience will shape a stronger future

Starlets bow out of Wafcon with hard lessons learned

By **Martin Weche**

Harambee Starlets end forgettable WAFCON 2026 campaign with 2-0 loss to Algeria

Harambee Starlets ended their 2026 Women's Africa Cup of Nations campaign on Monday night without a win, a goal, or a point, beaten 2-0 by Algeria at the Olympic Stadium in Rabat to finish bottom of Group A.

First-half goals from Algeria captain Marine Dafeur and Lynda Bendris condemned Beldine Odemba's side to their third consecutive defeat of the tournament, bringing the curtain down on a return to African football's biggest stage that had promised so much but delivered so little.

The numbers are stark. Kenya lost all three group matches without finding the back of the net. Hosts Morocco topped the group with seven points, while Algeria advanced to the knockout stage with six. Senegal, who also failed to progress, were the only side Kenya could not separate themselves from in the final standings.

It was, by any measure, a sobering reckoning — but one that those inside the camp are already framing as a turning point rather than a terminus. Speaking after the final whistle in Rabat, Odemba was unflinching in her assessment and measured in her response.

"We had hoped to perform better today and throughout the tournament. We have picked valuable lessons, particularly in our tactical approach and preparation. We have also learnt the importance of converting the chances we create," she said.

The chances were there. Across all three group fixtures against Morocco, Senegal, and Algeria, the Starlets created openings — striking the woodwork on multiple occasions — but consistently came up short when the moment demanded composure and clinical precision. Kenya's best opportunity on Monday arrived in the 31st minute when Martha Amunyolet received a clear invitation in the box but fired inches wide with the goal at her mercy. It was a passage of play that captured the Starlets' Wafcon in miniature: promising, but ultimately fruitless.

The problems, however, ran deeper than finishing. Kenya arrived in Rabat plagued by administrative issues that led to protests over unpaid allowances and had limited high-level build-up matches ahead of the tournament. Odemba did not shy away from that reality.

"Although we had good preparations, including participating in the FIFA Series, playing more international friendly matches would have made a difference," she said, pointing to the structural gap between Kenya and the continent's established women's football nations.

The Starlets had qualified impressively, eliminating Tunisia before beating The Gambia 4-1 on aggregate to secure only their second-ever appearance at Wafcon. The expectation, after a ten-year absence from the tournament, was that the team would at the very least be competitive. Instead, they were beaten heavily in their opener — a 4-0 loss to hosts Morocco — before narrower defeats to Senegal and then Algeria exposed the same underlying fragilities: individual errors, missed chances, and the brutal difference in experience at the highest level.

Defender Euphrasier Shilwatso captured the mood of the squad in a social media post that resonated widely among supporters. "Nowhere near the level we expect from ourselves. We owe you a massive apology for the performance yesterday and the entire tournament. We appreciate every single one of you who backed us until the final whistle," she wrote.

Football Kenya Federation president Hussein Mohamed, while acknowledging the disappointment, sought to focus attention on reconstruction.

"The most important thing is that we have gained valuable experience. It is disappointing that we did not win a single match, but we will go back, correct our mistakes, and plan well to build a stronger team for the future," he said.

That longer view is the only credible one available now. Kenya's women's football has the raw material — the qualification campaign proved as much — but the gap between reaching a tournament and competing in one is wide, and crossing it requires sustained investment, regular high-level competition, and institutional stability that has too often been absent.

Odemba knows what needs to be done. Whether the federation gives her the tools and time to do it will determine whether Rabat 2026 becomes the low point from which a generation of Kenyan women's football was rebuilt — or simply another chapter in a story of unfulfilled potential.

The Starlets fly home without a point. The work starts now.

The MT. KENYA TIMES

When universities stop teaching, Kenya stops growing

Recurring strikes in Kenya's public universities are no longer a crisis — they have become a habit, and that is the real emergency

By: Levis Wangamati
@themtkenyatimes

As university lecturers intensify their industrial action over the implementation of collective bargaining agreements and staffing concerns, Kenya finds itself confronting a depressingly familiar crisis. Lecture halls fall silent. Academic calendars drift further into uncertainty. Thousands of students wake each morning unsure whether they are still pursuing a degree or simply waiting for one. Parents who have stretched every shilling to keep a child in university watch helplessly as another semester hangs in the balance.

This has happened before. It has happened often enough that many Kenyans no longer react with surprise. They sigh, shrug, and wait for the next round of negotiations to run its course. That quiet acceptance should worry us far more than the strike itself. A nation begins to lose something essential when extraordinary failures become ordinary headlines.

University of Nairobi

The latest industrial action is not simply a dispute over salaries or employment terms. It is a mirror, and what it reflects is the true condition of Kenya's public universities. Behind every demand lies a deeper question about trust. Can agreements reached through negotiation still be honoured? Can institutions fulfil the commitments they freely made? Can higher education continue to function when uncertainty has been built into its calendar as a recurring feature rather than an exception?

Kenya speaks confidently of becoming a knowledge-driven economy, a regional innovation hub, a serious competitor in science, technology, and research. Those ambitions deserve genuine applause. But aspiration alone cannot build a nation. It requires functioning universities, motivated lecturers, adequately funded institutions, and students whose education is shielded from the kind of disruption that has become, in this country, almost seasonal. No nation has ever educated its way to prosperity while treating its universities as permanent crisis zones.

The greatest tragedy of every lecturers' strike is not measured in missed classes. It is measured in opportunities that slip away without announcement. Research projects are suspended mid-stream. Innovations go undiscovered. Graduation dates are pushed back. Young people lose scholarships, internships, and career opportunities they had spent years working toward. Parents absorb financial burdens they never planned for. Employers eventually inherit graduates whose academic journeys have been repeatedly interrupted — and the economy absorbs costs it cannot easily quantify.

The damage runs deeper still. Every prolonged dispute sends a message to talented scholars that their contribution is negotiable, their welfare secondary. Some leave for institutions abroad where academic work is properly supported and professional commitments are kept. Others remain, but with a frustration that compounds year on year. A country that slowly loses its finest educators is undermining the very foundation upon which its future is being built.

None of this is to suggest that lecturers alone bear responsibility, or that the government faces easy financial choices. Public resources are limited, competing priorities are real, and universities themselves must embrace greater efficiency and accountability. But none of these realities can serve as a permanent excuse for allowing the same crisis to return on a predictable cycle. One dispute may be understandable. A recurring pattern of unresolved disputes is a failure of governance — and it should be named as such.

The greatest victims, as is so often the case, are those with the smallest voice in the negotiations: the students. They neither draft collective bargaining agreements nor approve university budgets. Yet they absorb every consequence. They lose time they can never recover, confidence in institutions they once trusted, and opportunities that may not come again. Their education becomes a casualty of problems they did not create and cannot solve.

Every strike, then, should force the country to sit with some uncomfortable questions. Why do agreements repeatedly collapse into conflict? Why are negotiations taken seriously only after learning has already stopped? Why has crisis become the primary language through which higher education secures national attention?

A nation does not become poor the day its treasury runs low. It begins to impoverish itself the day it normalises empty lecture halls and treats interrupted learning as a manageable inconvenience rather than a national emergency. Universities are not expenses to be managed at the margins of the budget. They are investments — their returns measured in doctors who save lives, engineers who build infrastructure, teachers who shape generations, journalists who hold power to account, entrepreneurs who create jobs, and researchers whose discoveries reshape the world.

The silence in today's lecture halls is therefore more than the absence of teaching. It is the sound of postponed innovation, deferred dreams, and a future that is waiting, with diminishing patience, for leaders who will act with honesty, courage, and foresight.

Ending the current strike will be necessary. Ensuring that the next generation never relives this same crisis will be leadership. Until then, every closed classroom remains a reminder: when universities stop teaching, Kenya stops growing.

Worth Noting:

- **This has happened before. It has happened often enough that many Kenyans no longer react with surprise. They sigh, shrug, and wait for the next round of negotiations to run its course. That quiet acceptance should worry us far more than the strike itself. A nation begins to lose something essential when extraordinary failures become ordinary headlines.**
- **The latest industrial action is not simply a dispute over salaries or employment terms. It is a mirror, and what it reflects is the true condition of Kenya's public universities. Behind every demand lies a deeper question about trust. Can agreements reached through negotiation still be honoured? Can institutions fulfil the commitments they freely made? Can higher education continue to function when uncertainty has been built into its calendar as a recurring feature rather than an exception?**

Published at Shashil Court Westlands & Printed at Mombasa Road, Nairobi by Exponential International Limited. P.O. Box 101675 - 00101 Nairobi.
Email: editorial@mtkenyatimes.co.ke | To place Adverts: Email: ads@mtkenyatimes.co.ke Tel: 0700 161 866, 0705 215 262, 0781 894 777. www.mtkenyatimes.com